

Relay services are very important to me. I support the comments filed by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI), Association of Late-Deafened Adults, Inc. (ALDA), Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network (DHHCAN), California Coalition of Agencies Serving the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCASDHH) and Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA).

The role of Telecommunications Relay Service Fund Advisory Council in the rate setting process needs to be expanded. Representatives of the deaf and hard of hearing community are part of the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council needs access to information about relay service costs and rates to study the issue and make a recommendation, before the FCC takes action. The rates should pay relay service providers fairly and cover all reasonable expenses, including outreach, marketing, research, and development. Low or insufficient rates will slow the development and growth of the video relay service, thereby delaying for the majority of deaf and hard of hearing a much needed telecommunications service that is functionally equivalent to voice telephone service.